

TOPIC: IN SUPPORT OF INCREASED AWARENESS OF AND EVIDENCE-BASED RESEARCH ON BIPOLAR DISORDER IN THE PEDIATRIC POPULATION

SUBMITTED BY: Oregon Health and Sciences University Student Nurses Association, Portland, OR

WHEREAS, bipolar disorder (BD) is defined as a “group of mood disorders that include manic episodes, hypomanic episodes, mixed episodes, depressed episodes, and cyclothymic disorder,” according to the criteria in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-IV-TR); and

WHEREAS, there has been a 40-fold increase in the diagnosis of BD in the pediatric population from 1994 to 2003, with a concurrent 2-fold increase in the diagnosis of BD in the adult population; and

WHEREAS, there is “no single, well-validated screening instrument for the clinical diagnosis of BD in children” and the current DSM-IV-TR criteria cannot be easily applied to children; and

WHEREAS, the diagnosis of BD in the pediatric population is complicated by differential presentation of symptoms, comorbid mental health disorders, and physical and psychosocial development; and

WHEREAS first-line treatment of BD is medication; and

WHEREAS the pediatric brain is developmentally different from the adult brain and the metabolism of medications differs between these age groups; and

WHEREAS, the efficacy and the safety of antipsychotics and mood stabilizers, used as first-line treatment for BD, have not been examined or well-established in the pediatric population; and

WHEREAS “evidence-based data regarding the treatment of children and adolescents with BD are very limited,” yet they are still treated in the same manner as adults; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the National Student Nurses’ Association (NSNA) encourage its constituents to collaborate with professional nursing and healthcare organizations to advocate for increased funding towards evidence-based research related to BD in the pediatric populations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the NSNA encourage its constituents to advocate for accurate screening, diagnosis, and treatment of pediatric patients diagnosed with BD; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the NSNA send a copy of this resolution to the American Nurses Association, the National League for Nursing, the American Hospital Association, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing, the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the National Institute of Mental Health, the American Psychiatric Nurses Association, the International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing, and any others deemed appropriate by the NSNA Board of Directors.